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SECDEF FOR JCS-J-5/JAPAN,
DASD/ISA/EAPR/JAPAN; DEPT PASS ELECTRONICALLY TO USDA
FAS/ITP FOR SCHROETER; PACOM HONOLULU FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ADVISOR;
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TAGS: [OIIP](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [ECON](#) [ELAB](#) [JA](#)

SUBJECT: JAPANESE MORNING PRESS HIGHLIGHTS 02/14/08

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Nikkei:

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3) Prime Minister's Official Residence (Kantei)

Prime minister's schedule, February 13

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)

February 14, 2008

09:26

Visited the Keihin Branch Oguro Office of the Kawanishi Warehouse Co. in Tsurumi-ku, Yokohama.

10:08

Visited the imported food quarantine and inspection center in the

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Yokohama Quarantine Station in Kanazawa-ku, Yokohama.

11:07

Visited the Yokohama Research Institute of the Japan Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology, with Senior Vice Science and Technology Minister Matsunami.

12:03

Met Yokohama Mayor Nakata at the Yokohama Grand International Continental Hotel.

13:18

Visited the Pacifico Yokohama in Nishi-ku to have a preliminary look for the TICAD meeting.

14:01

Arrived at his official residence.

14:43

Set up the signboard of the preparatory office for unification of consumer affairs administration in the Cabinet Office, with Senior Vice Minister Nakagawa of the Cabinet Office, Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Futahashi, and others. Later, visited the exhibition hall

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of panels related to Japanese nationals abducted by North Korea.

15:00

Issued an official appointment to Special Advisor Ito at the Kantei. Followed by Chief Cabinet Secretary Machimura. Later, joined by Cabinet Intelligence Director Mitani. Followed by Futahashi and Assistant Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Saka.

16:31

Met Foreign Ministry Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau Director General Saeki. Followed by Cabinet Office Special Advisor Okuda, Ito, Saka, and others. Later, met Deputy Foreign Minister Sasaki and Saeki.

18:51

Met Ito.

19:23

Met those who served as political section chief of press companies at a soba restaurant in Nagata-cho.

21:53

Returned to his official residence.

4) U.S. envoy offers apologies for U.S. Marine's rape

MAINICHI (Page 1) (Full)

February 14, 2008

Okinawa Gov. Nakaima, right, hands a letter of request to U.S. Ambassador to Japan Schieffer, left, during a meeting in the wake of an Okinawa-based U.S. Marine's rape of a junior high school girl. (Photo taken at 12:46 p.m., Feb. 13, by Takeshi Noda at the Okinawa prefectural government office)

U.S. Ambassador to Japan Schieffer and U.S. Forces Japan Commander Wright called on Okinawa Gov. Hirokazu Nakaima at the Okinawa prefectural government office yesterday afternoon and offered

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apologies for an Okinawa-based U.S. Marine's rape of a junior high school girl.

"I regret the incident," Schieffer told Nakaima. "We will fully cooperate with the governor and investigative authorities," he added, "and we will do all we can to bring about justice." With this, he stressed his intention to take steps for the thoroughgoing prevention of a recurrence. He also said, "We hope the suffering of the victimized girl and family will be healed as early as possible." The ambassador entrusted the governor with a letter to the girl and her family. The governor handed a letter to the ambassador, requesting the U.S. government to disclose preventive measures to the people of Okinawa Prefecture.

After that, Schieffer answered questions from reporters and clarified a plan to review the U.S. military's education of its personnel as a preventive step. Asked if the incident would affect the planned relocation of Futenma airfield, he only said, "I hope not, but if it (Futenma relocation) is affected, then we will respond accordingly."

5) Koumura protests U.S. serviceman's rape to U.S. envoy, calls on "preventive steps to be taken seriously"

SANKEI (Page 3) (Full)
February 14, 2008

Foreign Minister Masahiko Koumura called on U.S. Ambassador to Japan Schieffer and U.S. Forces Japan (USFJ) Commander Wright to the Foreign Ministry yesterday evening and lodged a strong protest against the rape of a junior high school girl in Okinawa. "We have asked the U.S. many times to enforce discipline," Koumura said. "Nevertheless," he went on, "the incident took place." He added: "It's very regrettable. I'd like to ask you to make earnest, continuous efforts to prevent such an incident from recurring."

"Personally," Schieffer replied, "I'm very much shocked." He added: "It's very terrible that a 14-year-old girl is victimized in an incident like this. I want to convey our heartfelt regret to the Japanese people." With this, he indicated that the United States would fully cooperate to investigate the incident.

"I want you to review the preventive measures you've taken in the past to see if they were effective," Koumura said. In response, Wright said: "The incident is very heartbreaking. I have ordered that we check our educational programs in the past."

According to the Foreign Ministry, USFJ provides educational programs, such as: 1) U.S. servicemen, after their arrival in Japan, will be provided with a training course of sessions on the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) and Okinawa's culture before their base assignments; 2) base commanders will brief those newly assigned personnel on principles and rules; and 3) base commanders will periodically meet to share information about incidents and accidents and discuss preventive measures. In Okinawa, U.S. military authorities patrol downtown areas where trouble can easily occur, according to the Foreign Ministry.

Meanwhile, U.S. Secretary of State Rice will shortly visit Japan. She is scheduled to arrive in Japan on Feb. 27 after attending the newly South Korean president's inaugural ceremony to be held in Seoul. Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda will meet with her and request

preventive measures.

6) U.S. Ambassador expresses plans to tighten discipline among U.S. military personnel, possibly including strengthened curfew

ASAHI (Page 1) (Full)
February 14, 2008

Atsuko Niwa

United States Ambassador to Japan J. Thomas Schieffer yesterday met with Foreign Minister Koumura at his ministry and declared that in response to the recent alleged rape of a junior high school girl by a U.S. Marine stationed in Okinawa, the U.S. will review and enforce tighter discipline among U.S. Forces Japan (USFJ) in all respects. The U.S. will review the educational programs and measures to prevent a recurrence of similar incidents that are provided separately by the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps. Also, the U.S. will review quickly such plans as to tighten curfew for military personnel, their dependents and American base workers. Stricter conditions for military personnel to live off-base will be imposed, given that the rape suspect lives off-base.

Schieffer briefed Koumura on an outline of the review. After the session, the Ambassador told reporters: "The measures we have taken to prevent sexual harassment and sexual violence will be reviewed and further tightened." The Ambassador went on to say that the "discipline not only for the Marines but also for (the Army, Navy, and Air Force) will also be reviewed in all respects."

According to one U.S. Embassy official, the U.S. will tighten discipline for USFJ separately from the general discipline the Department of Defense (DOD) sets for U.S. military personnel stationed abroad. As to when the new measures that will be formed after discussion with DOD will be put into practice, this official said: "It is unknown, but it will be handled as a top priority matter."

Because there is no end to sexual crimes committed by U.S. military personnel stationed in Japan, the U.S. has now concluded that the current preventive measures are insufficient. However, how to tighten the current measures in concrete terms has yet to be made clear. Attention is focused on whether the U.S. can come up with a fresh set of effective measures.

The current measures are offered separately by the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps. The measures consist mainly of two parts: (1) educational programs and (2) measures to prevent accidents and crimes. Under educational programs, U.S. military personnel at the sergeant-1st-class rank or below (and all Marines) who arrive in Japan without family receive lectures about the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) and Okinawan culture before they are installed in their posts.

The preventive measures include the "liberty card system," under which various colors of cards are issued to young U.S. military personnel to restrict their going off-base at night and the "off-limits," which temporarily bans U.S. military personnel from visiting certain areas and shops where problems frequently take place. In order to prevent accidents and incidents relating to drinking, military service members at the staff sergeant rank or below who are stationed without family and whose term of service in

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Japan is less than one year are prohibited from possessing personal vehicles and driving. Also, restrictions are imposed on the kinds of liquor and the amount of liquor they can drink.

Major steps taken by USFJ to prevent accidents and incidents

Educational program

? Arrival program (All Marines are obligated to take lectures about

SOFA and Okinawan culture)

? Unit orientation (The commander of each unit briefs new arrivals on discipline and rules.)

? Regular meeting of unit commanders (Information about accidents and incidents are shared and preventive measures are discussed.)

Measures to prevent accidents and incidents

? Restrictions on leaving bases at night (Liberty card system). The red card is usually given to all Marines at the sergeant rank or below. They are banned from being off-base from midnight until 5:00 a.m. except for official duties.

? A temporary nighttime curfew for military personnel

? Ban on visiting certain areas or shops temporarily (Off-limits)

? Military officers in civilian clothing patrol the shopping and entertainment districts and give military personnel daily guidance.

? Soldiers who arrived at their posts without family are banned from possessing personal vehicles and driving, and the kinds of liquor they can drink and the amount are limited.

7) U.S. Ambassador Schieffer on rape incident: Such are always "extremely painful"; Promises full cooperation

ASAHI (Page 34) (Full)
February 14, 2008

In response to the alleged rape of a junior high school girl by a U.S. Marine Corps staff sergeant in Okinawa, Foreign Minister Masahiko Koumura met U.S. Ambassador to Japan Thomas Schieffer at the Foreign Ministry yesterday. Koumura requested that the U.S. make serious and continuous efforts toward tightening discipline and preventing a recurrence of similar incidents. In response, the ambassador indicated the U.S. would offer full cooperation, saying: "Whether it is in Japan or the United States, this kind of incident is extremely painful."

After his meeting with Koumura, Ambassador Schieffer met the press and said: "All military personnel in Japan feel sorry and distressed by this. All Americans in Japan, no matter whether they are military personnel or not, and particularly, those parents who have children feel saddened and pained." He stressed that his heart went out to the victim and her family.

After arriving in Okinawa, Senior Vice Foreign Minister Itsunori Onodera met Marine Corps Bases Japan Commander Lt. General Zilmer at the ministry's Okinawa office in Naha yesterday and asked the U.S. to take necessary measures to enforce tighter discipline among service members and to prevent a recurrence of similar crimes. Zilmer replied: "We take the situation seriously. We will do our utmost to strictly enforce discipline and prevent a recurrence of incidents."

Onodera reportedly stressed the need for a thorough education

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program for U.S. military servicemen, remarking: "Some (among those related to the U.S. military) might still have the wrong feeling that Okinawa is a territory under occupation. I want you to undertake a complete education program."

Onodera also met Okinawa Governor Hirokazu Nakaima at the prefectural government office. Nakaima handed a letter addressed to Foreign Minister Koumura over to Onodera.

The letter expressed regret over the alleged rape incident and asked the Foreign Ministry to work on the U.S. side to publicize the details of the effective steps it will take to prevent a recurrence of crimes.

8) Citizens group gathers near U.S. Embassy to protest rape incident

ASAHI (Page 34) (Full)
February 14, 2008

In protest against the alleged rape incident of a junior high school

student by a U.S. Marine in Okinawa, about 40 people gathered near the U.S. Embassy in Minato Ward, Tokyo, yesterday, to demand an apology by President Bush and a removal of U.S. bases from Japan.

Putting up a placard, the demonstrators shouted: "We never forgive crimes committed by U.S. soldiers;" and "How long will these same things go on?" They also read letters of protest in front of the embassy and then handed the letters over to an embassy staff member.

Miho Nagahashi, 59, from Niho City, Tokyo, was enraged: "The repetition of this kind of incident angers me. Similar incidents have occurred many times, but looking at the responses made by Japan and the U.S., I can't help feeling that similar crimes could happen any time. I want the U.S. military to withdraw from Japan."

9) DPJ Ozawa expresses willingness to revise Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement

SANKEI (Page 5) (Full)
February 14, 2008

In reference to the alleged rape of a junior high school girl by a U.S. Marine Corps staff sergeant in Okinawa, Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) President Ichiro Ozawa stated in an interview in Oyama City, Tochigi Prefecture, that his party would launch a discussion on revising the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement. He said: "It is important to revise the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement and establish a system under which Japan can deal with crimes (committed by U.S. military personnel) under equal judicial procedures."

10) "Sexual assault is unforgivable," says Misawa Air Base commander

ASAHI (Page 34) (Full)
February 14, 2008

Following the rape of a middle school girl in Okinawa by a U.S. Marine, Misawa Air Base Commander O'Shaughnessy sent to commanders of all units a message noting that sexual assault is intolerable. The message was sent by e-mail or in written form.

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According to the press office of Misawa Air Base, the message was sent on the evening of Feb. 12, seeking stronger discipline from all U.S. military sources, including civilians working at the base.

Unit commanders were asked to confirm that all the troops read the message.

11) U.S. Marine denies rape

ASAHI (Page 34) (Full)
February 14, 2008

U.S. Marine Corps staff sergeant Tyrone Hadnott, 38, based in Okinawa, has been arrested on suspicion of raping a 14-year-old middle school girl. Hadnott stated during questioning by Okinawa Prefectural Police that while he sought a sexual relationship with her, she rejected his advances, and he did not assault her, Asahi Shimbun has learned. The prefectural police are carefully investigating the incident, by analyzing the car and a jumper they seized from the suspect's house.

Hadnott was arrested around 10:35 p.m. on Feb. 10 on suspicion of raping the girl in a car parked on the road. He has so far admitted to pressing himself against her and touching her in the car. However, the police said that he is denying the charges, saying, "She refused my advances, and I did not force myself on her."

Regarding the allegation that he took the girl to his house by motorcycle after meeting her in Okinawa City and then drove her around afterward, Hadnott explained: "I did not force her. She did not appear to be upset." He also allegedly said, "I did not do anything to threaten her."

However, the prefectural police suspect that the terrified girl sought help from her friend by cell-phone and tried to escape while she was in his car.

12) U.S., Russian warplanes in close encounters

MAINICHI (Page 3) (Full)
February 14, 2008

WASHINGTON-A U.S. fighter jet intercepts a huge Russian bomber -- the U.S. Navy has released an Associated Press (AP) photo of that scene. On Feb. 9, U.S. and Russian forces were engaged in close encounters over the sea south of Japan, a U.S. military official testified before Congress on Feb. 12. The scene is reminiscent of the coldest days of the Cold War.

According to the official, four Russian Tupolev 95 (Tu-95) bombers flew at a low altitude over the USS Nimitz, a U.S. nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, when she was on a training mission. The flattop scrambled four F-18 fighter jets to intercept them as one of them buzzed her. On Feb. 9, a Russian bomber violated Japan's airspace over the sea south of the Izu Islands. The U.S. military believes that the airspace violator is one of those four Russian bombers. The official voiced concern, saying the Russian air force is now as active as it was in the Cold War.

13) Midnight terrorist attack drill at Tokyo Station

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TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 1) (Full)
February 14, 2008

In the run-up to the Group of Eight Summit (G-8), the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department and the Tokyo Fire Department conducted a joint drill assuming that the Shinkansen has been attacked by terrorists. The drill took place on the Tokaido Shinkansen tracks at JR Tokyo Station from the night of Feb. 13 through early morning of the 14th.

The no. 16 track and a real bullet train carriage were used for the drill. The drill was conducted based on the assumption that many passengers had collapsed in a running bullet train bound for Tokyo Station. Fire fighters in protective suits rescued seriously injured persons after evacuating other passengers. Then the public security mobile investigation squad of the Tokyo police, which specializes in nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) attacks, determined that the suspicious object was sarin, and recovered the object. Riot policemen then washed the car.

The Tokyo police view that the main battlefield for security for the G-8 is Tokyo. They are conducting antiterrorism drills and strengthening cooperation with private companies.

14) Defense Ministry's reform council debates unification of civilian and uniformed groups in the ministry

MAINICHI (Page 5) (Full)
February 14, 2008

The Defense Ministry's Reform Council (chaired by Naoya Minami, advisor to Tokyo Electric Co.) held its fifth meeting yesterday at the Prime Minister's Official Residence (Kantei) and focused its discussion mainly on the private proposal of Defense Minister Shigeru Ishiba, who proposes a structural unification of the internal bureaus (civilian group) and the ground, maritime, and air forces (uniformed group).

The Ishiba proposal would reorganize the internal bureaus and the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) into three components: "building defense capabilities"; "operations"; and "public relations, including Diet deliberations and briefings." The aim is to change the current situation in which the internal bureaus have predominance over the SDF, as well as to establish civilian control by politicians. In the meeting, such views were expressed as: "We should first make it

clear what kind of inadequacies exist in the current set up."

15) LDP starts studying SDF dispatch permanent law; Relaxing weapons-use rules a likely point of contention

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Abridged slightly)
February 14, 2008

The Liberal Democratic Party's joint taskforce on permanent legislation on international cooperation, chaired by former LDP Vice President Taku Yamasaki, met yesterday and started studying the possibility of a permanent law governing the overseas dispatch of the Self-Defense Forces. The LDP and the New Komeito intend to launch their project team as early as Feb. 27 with an eye on the new Antiterrorism Special Measures Law, scheduled to expire in January 2009. The LDP intends to submit a bill to the current Diet session. The party also plans to establish a dialogue with the major

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opposition Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto) to discuss the subject.

At yesterday's meeting, Yamasaki said:

"We would like to pave the way for a permanent law so that our international contributions will not end with the expiration of the new antiterrorism law. We want to a complete plan during the current Diet session for deliberations."

The current Antiterrorism Special Measures Law stipulating the Maritime Self-Defense Force's refueling mission in the Indian Ocean is temporary legislation good only for one year. There is a view in the ruling camp that establishing a permanent law is more pragmatic than repeatedly enacting time-limited special measures laws. In order to enact the law in the next extraordinary Diet session the fall, the contents of the planned bill must be nailed down during the current session.

Chances are becoming stronger that the battle between the ruling and opposition camps over the maintenance of the provisional tax rate on gasoline will be settled in March. Focusing on a permanent dispatch law, the government and ruling coalition want to launch a framework for policy talks with the DPJ in April if possible. Yamasaki expressed his eagerness to hold talks with the DPJ before submitting a bill. Once a bill is presented, calls for extending the current Diet session beyond the June 15 expiry are likely to grow stronger.

Some DPJ lawmakers, mostly conservative members, hold positive views toward permanent legislation. One ruling party member said: "Even if the DPJ does not respond to our call for talks on permanent legislation, we can shake up the largest opposition party."

Easing the rules on the use of weapons would be the biggest bone of contention in discussing the permanent legislation. SDF personnel on overseas missions are allowed to use weapons only for justifiable defense and purposes. There is a view in the LDP that in the event foreign troops in the same operation or UN personnel are attacked, the SDF should be allowed to rush over and use weapons to provide protection for them.

The ruling and opposition camps are deeply divided on whether to require a UN resolution for SDF dispatch. The dominant view in the ruling and ruling camp is that the government should be allowed to make decisions independently on sending SDF troops in compliance with requests from other countries even without UN resolutions.

16) Ruling coalition to forgo revision of provisional tax rates bill in Lower House

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Excerpts)
February 14, 2008

The ruling parties decided yesterday on a policy of forgoing a modification in the House of Representatives of a bill revising the Special Taxation Measures Law, which includes measures to retain the current provisional rates for gasoline and other road-related taxes,

the main focus of attention in the current Diet session. They are determined that the environment has not been created for them and the main opposition Democratic Party (DPJ or Minshuto) to hold talks on revising the government's bill. While considering a revision of the bill in the House of Councillors, the ruling coalition

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prioritizes passing the bill through the Lower House before the end of the current fiscal year. Since a battle over the scheduling of deliberations is intensifying between the ruling and opposition camps, there is no mood for holding a dialogue.

LDP Deputy Secretary General Hiroyuki Hosoda expressed strong suspicion about the DPJ's work of drafting its own bill, counterproposals toward the government's bill, saying: "I wonder about the logical compatibilities in their bill."

In a meeting yesterday of its shadow cabinet, the DPJ adopted an interim report on a bill to reform the provisional taxation system, which stipulates that the special account of road-related taxes should be integrated into the general account and that measures should be created to cover local government's revenue shortfall stemming from abolition of the provisional tax rates. The main feature of the bill is to create measures to cover the tax revenue shortfall in local governments -- about 900 billion yen -- due to abolition of subsidies for projects from the government. Hosoda, however, said: "It is impossible to start implementing such measures in April."

The LDP leadership is concerned that the DPJ may prevent the bill from clearing the Diet before the end of this fiscal year by gaining time with consultations on revising the bill. Therefore, the DPJ began taking a strategy of placing priority on promotion of deliberations with an eye on the bill's passage by the Lower House in February.

The four opposition parties -- the DPJ, Japanese Communist Party, Social Democratic Party, and People's New Party -- affirmed in a meeting of their Diet affair chiefs that they would oppose a plan to begin this week deliberations on the government's bill. Referring to the fact that the ruling coalition proposed a deliberation on a revision on the government's bill, as well as on the fiscal 2008 budget bill, the DPJ's Yamaoka said in a press conference: "It's impossible."

As a result, the ruling camp agreed in a meeting of the Lower House Steering Committee last evening to start deliberations on the 19th, giving up its plan to being this week. The Lower House Financial Affairs Committee will state debate on the 20th. However, senior ruling coalition member expressed displeasure, saying: "It will be very difficult to get the bill passed by the Lower House before the end of February" with an eye on Diet testimony by unsworn witnesses and public hearings.

17) Prime Minister Fukuda appoints Tatsuya Ito as his special advisor on social security issues to secure solid political foothold; Possibility of creating discord

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Slightly abridged)
February 14, 2008

Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda yesterday appointed former Financial Services Minister Tatsuya Ito, a Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) lawmaker, as his special advisor on social security and handed a written appointment to him. For Fukuda, who appointed last September when he took office, most of the Prime Minister's Office (Kantei) staff, whom former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe had picked, it was the first time to appoint a special advisor, who acts as a most useful second. It seems that he has finally gained his political footing

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for the leadership under his office after nearly five months after taking office.

Since last December, Fukuda appointed former Japan Business Federation Chairman Hiroshi Okuda as special advisor to the cabinet (naikaku-tokubetsu-komon), and former Ambassador on Global Environment Mutsuyoshi Nishimura and Kazumasa Kusaka as special advisors to the cabinet (naikaku-kanbo-sanyo). With the appointment of Ito as his special advisor, Fukuda has finally filled the key posts in the Kantei.

Fukuda set up the post of special advisor on social security issues, aiming at restoring public confidence in his cabinet by plying up its effort to review the entire social security policy, including the pension systems. Ito was chosen because he is a policy specialist but he will keep at arm's length the social security-related offices, according to a government official. Fukuda told reporters last night: "I think he is an appropriate person to serve in the post since he knows well the structure of government and social security issues."

Ito will be also responsible for managing the government's National Council on Social Security, as well as offering views to Fukuda. The Prime Minister expects him to support Health, Labor and Welfare Minister Yoichi Masuzoe based on his experience of bringing an agreement between the government and ruling parties last August on the pension-records fiasco.

However, Ito is believed to have close ties with former Economic and Fiscal Policy Minister Heizo Takenaka, who promoted a structural reform policy in the former Koizumi government. He and former LDP Secretary General Hidenao Nakagawa share a policy that the fiscal

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system should be reconstructed through economic growth and cutting expenditures, not by increasing taxes. Therefore, some said that Nakagawa might have recommended him to Fukuda. There is a view that Nakagawa may strengthen influence over a battle over whether to hike the consumption tax since Ito will manage the National Council on Social Security, which also discusses the fiscal resources issue.

18) Koga travels to Iwojima (Iwoto) to attend memorial ceremony for those who fell in battle

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Liberal Democratic Party lawmaker Makoto Koga, who chairs the party's election steering committee, visited Iwoto (Ogasawara Village, Tokyo) to pay respects to the spirits of those who fell in battle on behalf of the Japan Association of Bereaved Families of the War Dead, which Koga chairs. He there participated in the ceremony for the war dead. Since the reversion of the island to Japan in 1968, the association has paid its respects there 12 times, but this is the first time for the current chairperson to make the trip.

SCHIEFFER